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CURRENT EDUCATIONAL LITERATURE.

CONDUCTED BY PRINCIPAL J. E. RUSSELL.

Sham Education. J. P. MAHAFFY. The Nineteenth Century. Jan., 1893. pp. 19-35.

The past twenty years have been marked by many so-called reforms in education. Most countries have adopted some form of compulsory school attendance. In England the examination system holds full sway and is supplemented by prizes and result fees which, instead of coercing, now coax the growing child with bribes. The University Extension movement is expected to spread abroad the fruits of scholarship. At the head stand new bodies, chartered and endowed, which give examinations and grant degrees. But this is nothing as compared with the opening of almost the whole civil and military service to competition. Good breeding and influence are of no account in the reports of the examiners. But what of the outcome? Compulsory attendance really inflicts cruelty on children poorly clothed and ill fed. And if they learn to read, what profit is it? The poorest trash only is at their disposal. Local libraries should be attached to every school to supply good reading. As at the bottom, so at the top. The B.A. degree no longer stands for better breeding or culture, but for success in passing examinations. Cheap titles are an injury to the lower classes. In getting the degree, its true significance is overlooked; education degenerates into a system of cramming. But why spoil good ploughmen or artisans in making second-rate professional men? Modern Greece is a striking example of over-production in educational lines. The fields are going to waste, while the towns are filled with ambitious young men. Ireland is suffering in the same way. The cheap degrees of the Royal University attract too many competitors. "What we want is not an additional crowd of shoddy graduates, but a larger number of earnest farmers, and artisans, and shopkeepers, and men of ordinary business, whose thrift and honesty will shame and reform the idle and dishonest." Not only is true education being lost sight of, but the strain now being put upon men in the race for preferment seriously injures their health; they come to their professions anaemic, myopic, worn-out creatures. In Ireland the examination craze has reached the intermediate or grammar schools. The contest is not only among individual pupils but among schools. Prizes and result fees are now the standard

of excellence. The school-master has not the slightest choice of what he will teach. Whatever pays best is best. Scholarship is not as high as twenty years ago. The time given to "practical" subjects is wasted. And yet the curriculum is being enlarged. Men forget that "education consists in learning how to learn, not in learning all that has to be known." The quantity of teaching is damaging the quality; instruction is impeding education. The entire modern system is characterized by hurry; and hurry is fatal to all good training. The modern thinks that the world's progress is unlimited; that as knowledge advances, all vice and crime will be checked. The ancient thought that however near perfection we attain, decay and ruin will come. Plato and his followers did not believe in the perfectibility of the masses. Which is more logical! If Christianity has not been able to master the beast-residuum of society, what can do it? Education or instruction can not succeed. There is no panacea for human ills. Then let us not spoil our education in the vain attempt to do the impossible. Through hurry, and because of false standards, we reap a crop of physical and mental evils to take the place of those we are striving to remove. The genuine and lasting effects come not in this way.

J. E. R.

Études et Recherches.* R. VIRCHOW. Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement. Dec., 1892. pp. 493-513.

The University necessarily watches education in general, both elementary and more advanced. The University is a constant incentive to excellence for the lower schools, and a model for those of higher rank. Again, the mission of the University is to furnish the State with trained and capable young men. The pre-eminence and privileges once enjoyed have diminished, but the era of attack and restriction is also past. We still possess the right to teach and the right to study. The student is to-day a citizen like others, his only privileges are the right to study and, if his studies be honorably pursued, the right to advancement. The aim of University study is general culture, both intellectual and moral, in connection with a complete familiarity with some particular science. The student that is behindhand at the close of his University career is not likely to enjoy again an equal liberty to study. To exercise this liberty, the candidate must have a taste for study. How insure this taste? That is, what can be done *in higher schools* to insure such amount of culture as will guarantee satisfactory work afterward? The University demands two things: taste for study, aptitude for individual work. The former is simply that curiosity innate in child and man. The tendency to investigation is equally natural. Education finds here

* Inaugural address as Rector of the University of Berlin, Oct. 15, 1892.

all its elements ; it is necessary only to put them in practice and to direct them along methodical lines. Yet in all our schools the passion for learning is often so misdirected that it is perverted into idle curiosity. The ideas of genesis and of causation should be implanted. For this are recommended history, religious history, and natural history. Languages have always occupied the chief place in upper schools ; first, Latin alone, later, Greek also. Latin is now obsolete as a means of communication, hence rhetorical study has been superseded by grammatical, while Greek is already half abandoned. But grammar fails to arouse the desired love of study. There remain other subjects, a familiarity with which guarantees best the young student's general acceptability ; mathematics, philosophy, natural science. The extent of familiarity is variously postulated. A split has occurred ; owing to industrial demands we have the *Realgymnasium* and the technical school. Universities have universally preferred the classically trained students, but disagreement in detail still exists in the different Faculties. If the classics are not to remain as a common bond among the cultured, the only substitute is the triad : mathematics, philosophy, natural science ; training the powers of calculation, of reasoning, and of observation. Some of this programme may seem superfluous, but if the University is to be more than a bunch of professional schools, we must demand general study as well as special.

Wm. Strunk, jr.

The Psychology of Personal Influence. SARAH CORBETT. *Journal of Education* (London). Jan., 1893. pp. 16-17.

Psychology, as at present studied, deals chiefly with mental action considered apart from the living action of one mind upon another. This is why it is so difficult to carry out psychological theory in practical work. Probably it is the unconscious perception of this fact that leads many persons to assert that the teacher, like the poet, *nascitur, non fit*, and to deduce from this assertion the conclusion that all training for teachers is useless. No amount of mere knowledge will enable a teacher to put himself in touch with his pupils. Training for the teacher should throw some light on the main problem of how to acquire direct insight into mental processes, in order to influence them close at hand. Children are sometimes permanently injured by being allowed to remain under teachers who, however well-meaning, are unable to supply their special intellectual needs. Healthy development cannot go on without some amount of direct sympathetic insight on the part of the teacher. The teacher must learn to make this influence felt by his mere presence. There is a force in character superior to all spoken words. A teacher can never be successful who does not consciously or unconsciously develop this force in himself and learn how to use it. An important element, then, in

the training of teachers is the awakening and cultivation of the will power and the sympathies. The most common error made by the teacher is the attempt to suppress natural tendencies instead of guiding and directing them. It is not a good plan to sit on the safety valve of a steam engine. Another mistake which young teachers often make is *to try to get as much work* out of the class as possible. This forces the pupils in self-defence *to try to do as little work as possible*, and introduces that feeling of opposition between teacher and pupils which is one of the most objectionable elements in school life. Healthy and satisfactory work is never done where this feeling prevails, and it sows the seeds of selfishness in the pupils' minds. If children were not at school forced into a position of antagonism, there would be less self-seeking in later life. The clue to the whole position is harmony of aim between teacher and pupils—the full realization on both sides that they are working for a common end. A teacher who has an intuitional and sympathetic perception of common needs and of special needs, is able to strike the right keynote, confidence on the part of the pupils in his willingness and ability to help them follows, and harmonious action is possible. The born teacher has this intuitional power naturally in a high state of development, but in others it may be developed by careful study, especially the study of child-nature.

George G. Brower.

Can Moral Conduct be Taught in Schools. G. H. PALMER. The Forum. Jan., 1893. pp. 673-685.

There is a demand for ethical instruction in schools. The youth of to-day are not surrounded by the same influences as obtained in former times. The schools have largely usurped the place of church and home in the training of the child. Training in morals, therefore, is asked of the schools. But "ethics is related to morals as geometry to carpentry; the one is a science, the other its practical embodiment. In the former, consciousness is a prime factor; from the latter it often is absent altogether." What is needed is not that the pupil should learn to dissect his habits—"to be continually fingering his motives"—but rather that right action should become instinctive. "Only instinctive action is swift, sure, and firm." The study of ethics, if scientific, leads the pupil to analyze his conduct and to discover its laws. It invites criticism and, if lacking in perspective, tends to produce a morbid self-consciousness. "The principle is clear: wait till the young man is confronted with the problems before you invite him to their solution. . . . The college, not the school, is the place for the study. . . . Moral training, on the other hand, is always in season and can never safely be intermitted. . . . I hold that it is not so much to the instruction of the school or college as to its management and temper that we must look for

moral aid. That school where neatness, courtesy, and simplicity obtain; where enthusiasm goes with mental exactitude, thoroughness of work with interest, and absence of artificiality in surroundings with refinement; where sneaks, liars, loafers, pretenders, rough persons are despised—that school is engaged in moral training all day long.”

J. E. R.

Status of the High School in New England. C. H. DOUGLAS.
Educational Review (N. Y.). Jan., 1893. pp. 27-34.

This article is based upon information received from principals of high schools representing approximately ninety per cent of the population in each of the New England States. A revised table furnished us by Superintendent Douglas shows that for the past three years fifty-seven per cent of the New England students entering 18 colleges were prepared in the high schools. It also brings to light the relative predominance of the local or state constituency in each college: Maine sends annually more than half of her students to Bowdoin and Colby; of 45 New Hampshire students, Dartmouth gets 21; Massachusetts gives 117 to Harvard and only 10 to Yale; Connecticut sends to Yale $49\frac{2}{3}$ for every 10 fitted for Harvard; more than one-half of the Vermont students enter the state university; Rhode Island is loyal to Brown—of the 41 male students annually fitted for college in her public schools, she sends on an average $34\frac{2}{3}$ to the home university. The private schools appear not to be in competition with the public schools—“less than twenty per cent of the total enrollment of the private secondary schools comes from towns that maintain a high school giving even passable preparation for college.” The efficiency of the New England high schools is explained by a table showing the training and experience of the teaching force. Within the limits chosen, Superintendent Douglas finds 56 per cent of the teachers college graduates, 73 per cent have more than three years' experience and for 28 per cent the average term of service in their present schools is nearer ten years than five.

J. E. R.

Le Fonctionnarisme et l'Enseignement Secondaire. L. W. PROFF.
Revue Internationale de l'Enseignement. Dec., 1892. pp. 514-527.

The author is surprised at the resources of French secondary education; no less at the way it is trammelled. Pedagogy, like medicine, is an art rather than a science. Men are more important than methods. In this investigation, care was taken not to rely on official documents, nor to estimate France from Paris alone. Brilliant men were found numerous; educators, teachers, few. The evil comes from above. The assistants, who supervise study and recreation, do not teach and have no influence. The teachers

have had no preliminary pedagogical training, theoretical or practical. Among them all is discouragement and protest. The individual is a functionary, the slave of a cut and dried routine. Each works alone; promotion is by seniority; everything is hopelessly mechanical. The Directors are helplessly tied down, and moreover incompetent. Those next in authority, the Inspectors, are figureheads. The next, the Rectors, are responsible for all education: primary, secondary, university; they are too far from the circumference to be familiar with details. The Inspectors General have the highest duties. They establish regulations, visit all the schools, and are in communication with the whole personnel. But though distinguished men, they are none of them educators. The inspections are purely superficial. Again, theoretical questions are decided by the Council of Public Instruction and by commissions. The machine is directed by countless impersonal forces; responsibility is infinitesimally distributed. French education is a body without a soul. If a national system of education is to be established, men of ideas must supplant officials; merit must govern advancement; after due precaution in admitting men to power, they must be allowed to act. Consult them in choosing their superiors, and remove those who lack authority. Dry and listless administration must give place to an education having life and soul.

Wm. Strunk, jr.

Public School System of New York City. J. M. RICE. Educational Review (N. Y.). Jan., 1893. pp. 616-630.

The degree of excellence of a school system is represented by the minimum requirements that may be accepted as satisfactory. In New York City this minimum is exceedingly low. The principal of a primary school has been marked uniformly "excellent" for twenty-five years or more and yet the work has been, and is now, absurdly mechanical. A child on entering her school leaves behind all that he may have learned; he is given ready-made thoughts as supplied by a ready-made vocabulary. The greater part of the primary course is occupied in grinding into the minds of pupils a set of questions and answers designed to cover the entire school curriculum. Definitions are recited glibly and with amazing rapidity. They are repeated from week to week and year to year. The child becomes an automaton, and at all times acts with the precision of clock-work. There are rules for the position of the head in recitation, rules for the use of the hands, rules for asking questions, rules for giving answers—rules, regulations, everywhere and for everything. "The typical New York City primary school is a hard, unsympathetic, mechanical drudgery school a school into which the light of science has not entered. Its characteristic feature lies in the severity of its discipline, a discipline of enforced silence, immobility, and mental passivity.

The difference found in going from room to room and from school to school is a difference in degree only and not in kind. One teacher will allow her pupils to move their head a little more freely than the standard, another will allow a little more freedom to the shoulder-joints, but less freedom in moving the head, and the third requires the children to keep their hands in their laps, instead of behind their backs." The instruction appeals to the memory alone. Reading is taught by the combined word and spelling method, and no effort is made to teach the child to recognize new words. When a new word is needed, the teacher throws out a hint and the class guess at what is intended; the word, when found, is at once put upon the list to be memorized. Sentences are made of words selected from the list; the unit of thought is disregarded. Other branches are no better taught. The difficulty is easily accounted for. There is absolutely no incentive to teach well. Teachers are rarely discharged, even for the grossest negligence and incompetency. The consent of three trustees out of five, two inspectors out of three, and finally sixteen of the twenty-one members of the Board of Education, must be secured before a teacher can be removed. Secondly, the supervision is a farce. The Superintendent and eight assistants are charged with the oversight of four thousand teachers. The efficiency of a school depends entirely upon the principal. "Nearly all appointments are made by 'pulls,' merit being a side issue." In such a system it is impossible to locate responsibility. The remedy suggested by the experience of smaller cities, is that there should be "at least twenty independent districts, each one of which should be placed in charge of a superintendent having all the powers and responsibilities of a city-superintendent." The district-superintendents should be appointed by the city-superintendent, and they in turn should nominate all teachers. Each district should work in harmony with the whole, but with such freedom as would best serve the interests of the district.

J. E. R.

The Classics and Written English. C. F. ADAMS. *The Root of the Evil.* W. W. GOODWIN. Harvard Graduates' Magazine. Jan., 1893. pp. 177-193.

The first discussion is based upon the examination books in Greek and Latin of those candidates for admission to Harvard who came last June from twelve selected New England schools. The writers averaged nineteen years of age. These books were compared with a collection of several hundred Freshman "compositions." The conclusion reached is that the present methods of training are wrong and the results disproportionately small, much the same as if the student learned to speak by having an exercise in declamation once a week and passed the rest of the

time in silence. Composition writing merely becomes a study by itself. The student can write an essay, such as it is ; he cannot render Greek or Latin into English. The remedy is that proposed by President Eliot,—“constant practice under judicious criticism.” This conclusion, the same as that of the Committee on Composition and Rhetoric, has been contested ; the schools themselves profess to insist on free, original, and idiomatic translations. To test this, the 350 examination books referred to were examined for English. At the close of the article are given eight complete translations and four pages of facsimile. They are characterized as “a dull level of translation English. Occasionally there is a good book ; but on the whole, as far as English is concerned, one book is as good as another.” As a sample may be offered :

“Here from all sides a great shout of varying dissention raises itself to the air, not otherwise and in a lofty grove when by chance Turnus, the time having been siezed, says, nay oh, citizens, summon the council and sitting down demand peace they rush too the palace in arms.”

Query, is not the entrance examination system at fault ? Does it not tend to make skill in cramming supplant the art of education ? Secondary education for its own sake has suffered because another end is in view. It is suggested, as leading to possible improvement, to try the plan of doing away with entrance examinations in the case of some dozen or twenty schools that would agree to conform entirely to a defined programme and standard, and admitting students from them on probation by certificate. Candidates from other schools could be examined as now, and the list of certificate-schools could be subject to annual revision. No school, once accepted, could afford to be removed from the list, and teachers would be under continual bond not to abuse the confidence placed in them. Responsibility would be transferred from the examiner to the teacher, who moreover could now educate instead of cram. At least, the change could not make matters worse than they are now.

Professor Goodwin believes that there is no need for Harvard to continue wasting time, strength, and money in eradicating the illiteracy of her students. But bad English is not all that the college has to contend with. The Harvard candidate at nineteen is in classics and mathematics far behind the boy of sixteen in England, Germany, France, or Switzerland. The entrance examination is a mere “pass” examination, and few go beyond its minimum requirements. In England “pass men” are practically excluded from the best instruction. A correct use of the language is enforced in all written work. That the American boy is so much worse off is not the fault of his preparatory teacher. There must be a reform in the lower schools. Studies are now badly learned because learned too late. The translations printed in the report of the Committee disclose bad English, but ignorance of Greek and Latin no less. As far as English is con-

cerned, the present duty of the College is to condition every student whose entrance papers are slovenly and ungrammatical, and to grant the bachelor's degree to no one who has not shown that he can write good English ; thus making a knowledge of English an absolute, instead of a nominal, requirement for a degree.

Wm. Strunk, jr.

A league has been formed between a few schools in Central New York for the purpose of mutual assistance to a higher grade of school work. It is proposed to have two or three meetings a year. Each meeting will be devoted to a single topic, and actual methods employed in the various schools will form the theme for discussion. It is hoped that some uniformity in method and amount will be found practicable. The first meeting will be held in Binghamton, February 24 and 25. The topic for discussion will be "The Teaching of English in Secondary Schools." On Friday evening there will be a round-table conference to which will be invited Professors of English in Central New York colleges and members of the local school board. Teachers interested are invited to correspond with the following committee: Principals Russell of Ithaca, Dewey of Binghamton, Hill of Havana, Barto of Ithaca, and Hunt of Corning.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

From Ginn & Company:

Principles of Education, by Malcolm MacVicar, Ph.D., LL.D., former Principal State Normal and Training School, Potsdam, N. Y., First Chancellor of McMaster University, Toronto, Ont. pp. 178. Price 70c.

Extracts from Eutropius, edited by J. B. Greenough, Professor of Latin in Harvard University. pp. 41.

From C. W. Bardeen:

The History of Modern Education. An Account of the Course of Educational Opinion and Practice from the Revival of Learning to the Present Decade, by Samuel G. Williams, Ph.D., Professor of the Science and Art of Teaching in Cornell University. pp. 395.

From Macmillan & Company:

The Bacchae of Euripides, with a Revision of the Text and a Commentary, by Robert Velverton Tyrrell, Litt. D., Regius Professor of Greek and Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin. pp. 169.

A Short Historical English Grammar, by Henry Sweet, M.A., Ph.D., LL.D., formerly President of the Philosophical Society. pp. 264. Price \$1.25.